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## Viewing cable 06BEIRUT2476, TFLE01: UNSYG PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE PEDERSEN

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### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06BEIRUT2476**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06BEIRUT2476	2006-07-26 16:47	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN	Embassy Beirut

Appears in these articles:

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VZCZCXRO1989  
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ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 261647Z JUL 06  
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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4796  
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
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RHMFISS/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIRUT 002476

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NSC FOR ABRAMS/DORAN/WERNER/SINGH

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/26/2016  
TAGS: [IS](#) [KPKO](#) [LE](#) [MOPS](#) [PBTS](#) [PTER](#)  
SUBJECT: TFLE01: UNSYG PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE PEDERSEN

## SAYS DE-ESCALATION URGENTLY NEEDED

Classified By: Ambassador Jeffrey D. Feltman. Reason: Section 1.4 (d).

### SUMMARY

¶1. (C/NF) In a July 26 meeting with the Ambassador and econoff, UNSYG Personal Representative to Lebanon Geir Pedersen urged an immediate de-escalation to the fighting even if a cease-fire takes some time. He warned that the humanitarian situation and violence could spiral out of control in less than 14 days, including expansion of the geographic scope of the fighting. Pedersen suggested a de-escalation deal whereby Israel agrees to not attack targets north of the Litani River, while Hizballah agrees to stop launching rockets into northern Israel. This would leave a contained zone of conflict in southern Lebanon. Regarding the Israeli airstrike on a UN post, Pedersen said it was clearly intentional given that it was a long-standing, clearly marked post and Israel used precision guided munitions. Pedersen assessed Hizballah's strategy as waiting out the clock until Israel wanted a cease-fire. Nonetheless, Hizballah was open to a cease-fire if Israel stopped its bombing. The status of the Shebaa Farms was a key issue, according to Pedersen, in any cease-fire package. End summary.

### START WITH DE-ESCALATION

¶2. (C/NF) On July 26, UNSYG Personal Representative Geir Pedersen and Senior Political Affairs Officer Salman Shaikh came to the Embassy to meet the Ambassador and econoff regarding cease-fire efforts. Pedersen, following a meeting with Speaker Berri's foreign affairs adviser Ali Hamdan, said that a de-escalation is urgently needed. It appears as if a cease-fire deal is not going to happen soon, so the international community must at least try to contain the violence before it spirals out of control. Hamdan had warned Pedersen that in about 14 days the large numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs) will start creating instability in Beirut and the rest of Lebanon. Then the debate will not just be about instability in the south, but in the whole country. Moreover, the geographic scope internationally could expand.

¶3. (C/NF) Pedersen hoped to achieve a de-escalation with a compromise deal between Israel and (indirectly) Hizballah. He proposed that Israel would agree to cease all military strikes north of the Litani River if Hizballah agreed to stop firing rockets into northern Israel. This would restrict the combat to the south for a short period until a comprehensive cease-fire deal is reached. The Ambassador replied that he did not see how such a deal would benefit either side. Hizballah would still have to face Israeli destruction of Shia villages south of the Litani as well as displacement of its constituents. Meanwhile, Israel would be creating a safe haven for Hizballah in the rest of Lebanon without any guaranteed achievement of its goals. Pedersen accepted this critique, but emphasized that there must be some de-escalation soon, whatever the form.

### STRONG SUSPICION ISRAELI HIT ON UN POST WAS DELIBERATE

¶4. (C/NF) Turning to the July 25 Israeli airstrike on a UN post that killed four UNTSO observers, Pedersen said that UNIFIL commander Maj. Gen. Alain Pellegrini was convinced it was intentional. The UN post had been there for 30 years, it was clearly marked, and UNIFIL had repeatedly warned the IDF that its shells were hitting the post. In addition, Pedersen noted that the UN post was hit with precision guided munitions. Pedersen continued that he had been researching the 1982 Israeli invasion and was of the opinion that the IDF sometimes takes actions without the approval of Israel's political leadership. Pedersen suggested that the strike may

have been intended to derail the talks in Rome and discourage nations from offering troop contributions.

HIZBALLAH WAITING  
OUT THE CLOCK  
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¶5. (C/NF) Pedersen said that Hizballah officials he is in contact with are portraying themselves as confident. They appear comfortable with confronting Israel on the ground.

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Pedersen said that the Hizballah officials keep emphasizing the time factor in meetings with him. They talk about how much time (and casualties) it would take Israel to take the border villages and then to take Tyre. If Israel advances, they say, then Hizballah will regroup and counter-attack.

¶6. (C/NF) Hizballah does appear open to some kind of a cease-fire though. Hizballah officials denied to Pedersen that they have rejected an international stabilization force as reported in press. Hizballah has not taken a position yet. In addition, Hizballah officials tell Pedersen that Hizballah wants a cease-fire, as long as Israel stops bombing Lebanon. They promised to stop firing rockets if Israel stops its bombing.

¶7. (C/NF) Pedersen reported that Ali Hamdan believed that Hizballah could not be defeated militarily. As such, Pedersen speculated that Speaker Berri was warming to the idea of a comprehensive cease-fire package as long the status of the Shebaa Farms was a part of it. In any event, Pedersen commented, Israel has to lower its expectations. The Ambassador said that any cease-fire package must corner Hizballah from the domestic political context.  
FELTMAN